

Wisconsin, operates moderately successful casinos that draw largely from the same customer base.

The St. Croix Band of Chippewa Indians of Wisconsin – whose reservation includes land in five counties in northern and northwestern Wisconsin – operates two casinos; the larger St. Croix Casino in Turtle Lake has annual gross revenue of approximately \$100 million and annual net revenue of approximately \$30 million. The potential effect of a Hudson casino upon the Turtle Lake casino became a focus of the opposition to the proposal.

The three tribes seeking to develop a casino in Hudson were the Lac Courte Oreilles Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians (“LCO”), the Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians (“Red Cliff”) and the Mole Lake Band of the Sokaogon Chippewa Community (“Mole Lake”). The LCO tribe is based in Sawyer County, in northwestern Wisconsin, and has a total enrolled membership of about 5,500. Almost 2,000 members live on the reservation, and more than 1,000 others live within 150 miles of the reservation. At the time of the Hudson application, the tribal Chairman was gaiashkibos, who had held the post since July 1989. The tribe’s operating budget at that time was around \$20 million, with more than half of that coming from federal government programs. The tribe was carrying debt of more than \$6 million. The tribe generated about \$1.5 million in profits in 1993, and \$1.8 million in 1994. At the time of the Hudson casino proposal, the LCO casino was moderately successful.²² According to gaiashkibos, tribal unemployment at the time generally ranged from 45 percent in the summer months to 70 percent in the winter.

²²Since that time, the LCO tribe has renovated its on-reservation casino, and it is now financially more successful.